

Dare to Imagine 4th Sunday of Advent: Dare to imagine God's face! What amazing love is this that the Godhead comes down to us in the little clan of a little people and takes on a human face? With Mary, we rejoice in God, our Savior, by actively participating in God's leveling mercy.

Welcome

Call to Worship

Come.

Come as you are.

Come with your needs, your doubts,
your dreams, your hopes.

Come, expecting God to meet us—
here and in the innermost longing of our souls.

Watch. Wait.

God is present in our worship!

Prayer

Candle Litany

Leader: We light a candle of love, and imagine

People: the lowly lifted, fear met with love.

Leader: We light the candle and pray for God's face to
shine on us, to save us, restore us.

People: Imagine that . . . we are God's wonders, blessed wonders.

Songs

Confession and Assurance

Leader: We notice, O God, that when you feed people, everyone has enough.

**People: We notice that in our world, when we feed people, some have more than
enough,**

and many are still hungry.

Leader: Teach us to love.

**People: We notice, O God, that in your social, economic, racial, and gender orders, no
one is greater,**

and no one is left behind.

Leader: We notice that in our world there are many ladders, and many are climbing.

People: Reorientate us to your vision of equality.

Leader: God of mercy, lower us, raise us, empty us, and fill us. Like an empty manger, we
want to be ready

to receive Emmanuel.

Words of Assurance *(adapted from Luke 1:46-49)*

All: Our souls magnify the Lord, our spirits rejoice in God our Savior.

God has looked with favor on our lowliness.

The Mighty One has done great things for us, and holy is God's name.

Children's time

Scripture Psalm 80:1-7, Micah 5:2-5a, Luke 1:39-55

Sermon The Presence Creates Presents of Love: Gifts of Restoration on Another Road
Songs

Sharing/Pastoral prayer

After prayer times, **“Lord, in your mercy”** respond with **“hear our prayer.”**

Offering Song

Announcements

Please review, mark, fold and return your 2021-22 Sunday School and Church Office Affirmation Ballot in the offering basket.

Children’s Christmas Story Presentation following worship

New Year’s Eve worship, Dec. 31 7:30.

Intercultural Development Inventory summary session with Carlos, February 12. You may designate funds toward your IDI and the honorarium for Carlos for the introduction and summary to WS.

Cal will have a month of **Sabbatical and planning** starting on January 4, 2022.

Sending

(a Celtic prayer)

May the Christ who walks on wounded feet
walk with you on the road.

May the Christ who serves with wounded hands
stretch out your hands to serve.

May the Christ who loves with a wounded heart
open up your heart to love.

May you see the face of Christ in everyone you meet
and may everyone you meet see the face of Christ in you. Amen.

⁴⁶ And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful

⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.”

⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.